

MISSISSIPPI STATE AGENCIES SELF-INSURED WORKERS' COMPENSATION TRUST

Workers' Compensation E-News
March 2016



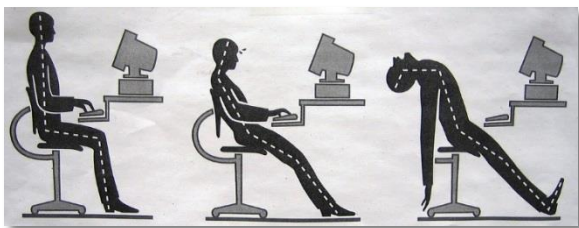
Computer Workstation Ergonomics: Body Positioning

Neutral body positioning is a comfortable working posture in which your joints are naturally aligned. One of the many benefits to working with the body in a neutral position is that it reduces stress and strain on the muscles, tendons and skeletal system.

The following are important considerations when attempting to maintain a neutral body posture while working at a computer workstation:

- Hands, wrists and forearms are straight, in-line, and roughly parallel to the floor.
- Head is level or bent slightly forward, forward facing and balanced. Generally, the head should be aligned with the torso.
- Shoulders are relaxed and upper arms hang normally at the side of the body.
- Elbows stay close to the body and are bent between 90 and 120 degrees.
- Feet are fully supported by floor or footrest.
- Back is fully supported with appropriate lumbar support when sitting vertical or leaning back slightly.
- Thighs and hips are supported by a well-padded seat and generally parallel to the floor.
- Knees are about the same height as the hips with the feet slightly forward.

"Ergonomic Postures: eTools." OSHA.gov. Web.



Seat Belts: Click it or Ticket

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 32,675 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2014. (By comparison, 2,986 people died in the 9/11 attack.) Traffic accidents are a leading cause of work-related injuries and fatalities.



We value the safety and lives of our employees, and we encourage employees to always buckle up, whether in a personal vehicle or riding in state provided transportation. It is estimated that seat belts reduce the risk of death and injury in a motor vehicle crash by 45 percent.

Make sure you wear your seat belt every time you are in a vehicle to:

- 1) Protect yourself from injuries and trauma.
- 2) Protect the state's most valuable asset, (you!)
- 3) Protect the state's reputation.
- 4) Help the state control insurance costs.

You should wear your seat belt for the same reason you would want your family to wear a seat belt. So you don't get hurt. Just as you would not let your child ride without a seat belt, don't let another employee either.

According to the Mississippi State Vehicle Use Agreement, you have pledged to operate state vehicles in a safe, prudent and lawful manner at all times. That includes wearing a seat belt and ensuring all occupants are buckled when the vehicle is in motion. State seat belt laws additionally apply to travel in a company owned vehicle, a rental vehicle or your own personal vehicle.

Half of the automobile injuries that happen to Mississippi State employees are the fault of another driver. That means you can do everything right and still be injured. That risk can be reduced if you buckle up any time your vehicle is in motion.

Ed Dicks, Loss Control, CCMIS

Bizarre Workers' Compensation Cases in 2015

Employer Saddled With \$21,000 Life Flight Bill for Employee's Cut Finger

An uninsured employer in Idaho is required to pay a \$21,201 bill for Life Flight helicopter services in connection with injuries sustained by a part-time irrigator at the employer's farm. The employee severely cut the tip of his left "pinky" finger when his hand slipped into the chain of a motor. Following the accident, the employee drove himself to the home of an off-duty police officer who then called 911. EMTs arrived, made a determination that perhaps the tip of the finger could be reattached and subsequently summoned Life Flight for patient transport. Efforts to reattach the injured employee's fingertip were unsuccessful. The employer contended that the Life Flight trip was a needless expense and that it was not medically necessary. The high court disagreed and acknowledged that, with the benefit of hindsight, the decision to fly the employee to the hospital might not have been made. Given the known circumstances at the time of the incident, however, the high court ruled substantial and competent evidence supported the Commission's decision for the employer to pay the Life Flight bill.

Great Dane & Steep Trails Don't Mix

In a case from California, a split Workers' Compensation Appeals Board (WCAB) panel rescinded a decision previously made by a WC judge, and held that a police officer who had filed for benefits did not sustain a compensable injury while hiking off-duty with his large dog, a Great Dane. The officer suffered injuries when the dog pulled on the leash, causing the applicant to tumble 60 feet down a hill, strike a boulder, shatter his right shoulder, break four ribs and puncture his lung. The WCAB panel reasoned that compensation claims stemming from off-duty recreational/athletic activities are barred under Labor Code § 3600(a)(9) if the employee's subjective belief that the activity during which the injury occurred was an expectancy of his employment, was unreasonable. The applicant failed to prove that it was objectively reasonable for him to believe that his individual fitness plan with this employer, the City of Vacaville, covered hiking on a steep, unmaintained trail.

Robinson, Thomas A. "The Top 10 Bizarre Workers' Compensations for 2015." LexisNexis.com. 3 Jan. 2016. Web.

We want to ensure the newsletter content meets your needs. If you have comments, questions, topics or issues you would like addressed, please let us know. Your suggestion may help others do their jobs better and safer. Please email your thoughts and ideas to John.Anderson@dfa.ms.gov.



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